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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/010,850	12/05/2001	Peggy J. Clews	SD6957S97604	7432

7590 02/12/2003

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EXAMINER

TRAN, BINH X

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1765

DATE MAILED: 02/12/2003

3

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/010,850	CLEWS ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Binh X Tran	1765	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 05 December 2001.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-18 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 11-18 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-10 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☒ Claim(s) 1-18 are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) <u>2</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. 121:
 - I. Claims 1-10, drawn to method, classified in class 216, subclass 99.
 - II. Claims 11-18 drawn to product (composition, classified in class 252, subclass 79.1.
2. The inventions are distinct, each from the other because of the following reasons:

Inventions II and I are related as product and process of use. The inventions can be shown to be distinct if either or both of the following can be shown: (1) the process for using the product as claimed can be practiced with another materially different product or (2) the product as claimed can be used in a materially different process of using that product (MPEP § 806.05(h)). In the instant case the product (composition) as claimed can be used to etch titanium.
3. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art because of their recognized divergent subject matter, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.
4. During a telephone conversation with John Hohimer on 2-6-2003 a provisional election was made with traverse to prosecute the invention of Group I, claims 1-10. Affirmation of this election must be made by applicant in replying to this Office action. Claims 11-18 are withdrawn from further consideration by the examiner, 37 CFR 1.142(b), as being drawn to a non-elected invention.

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5. Applicant is reminded that upon the cancellation of claims to a non-elected invention, the inventorship must be amended in compliance with 37 CFR 1.48(b) if one or more of the currently named inventors is no longer an inventor of at least one claim remaining in the application. Any amendment of inventorship must be accompanied by a request under 37 CFR 1.48(b) and by the fee required under 37 CFR 1.17(i).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

6. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

7. Claim 7 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

In claim 7, the phrase “ ‘semiconductor grade’ hydrofluoric acid” and “ ‘semiconductor grade’ sulfuric acid” are subjective, vague and indefinite. It is unclear from the specification what is the requirement for the acid to satisfy “semiconductor grade” rating. For the purpose of the examination, the examiner will assume that any hydrofluoric acid and/or sulfuric acid that are used in a semiconductor process read on “semiconductor grade” acid.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

8. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

9. Claims 1, 5-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Lin et al. (US 6,123,865).

Lin discloses a method for etching a semiconductor device comprising the step of:

etching the silicon oxide (read on oxide sacrificial material) using an etching solution comprising hydrofluoric acid (HF) and sulfuric acid (H₂SO₄) (col. 3-4).

Respect to claim 5, Lin discloses the semiconductor wafer is used for integrated circuit (read on "micromechanical device" and/or "microelectricalmechanical device", col. 1 lines 5-10). Respect to claim 6, Lin discloses the etching temperature is in the range of 20-60 °C (Table 1, read on applicant's range of 5-70 °C). Respect to claim 7, Lin discloses the HF and H₂SO₄ are used in the semiconductor etching (read on "semiconductor grade", see 112 rejection for further detail).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

10. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

11. Claims 2-4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lin in view of Gennissen (Sacrificial oxide etching compatible with aluminum metallization).

Respect to claim 2, Lin does not disclose the semiconductor device comprise at least one polysilicon layer. In a method for sacrificial etching, Gennissen discloses a polysilicon layer. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art, at the time of invention, to modify Lin in view of Gennissen by using the polysilicon layer because it will act as accelerometer for the interconnect.

Respect to claim 3, Gennissen further discloses a aluminum layer. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art, at the time of invention, to modify Lin in view of Gennissen by using a aluminum layer because it can be used as an interconnect layer.

Respect to claim 4, Gennissen discloses the etch selectivity for the oxide sacrificial relative to aluminum range from 40 to 680 (within applicant range of greater than 100). Gennissen further discloses the selectivity is a result effective variable (Table 3). The result effective variable is commonly determined by routine experiment. The process of conducting routine experiments so as to produce an expected result is obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art. Hence, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art, at the time of invention, to perform routine experiment to obtain optimal selectivity as an expected result.

12. Claims 8-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lin in view of Cripe (US 5,851,928).

Respect to claim 8-9, Lin fails to disclose the specific concentration of HF and H₂SO₄. In a semiconductor etching using HF and H₂SO₄, Cripe discloses the concentration of H₂SO₄ at 96% (read on at least 90%) and the concentration of HF is at

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49 % (read on 40-50%, col. 4 lines 5-10). It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art, at the time of invention, to modify Lin in view of Cripe by using HF and H₂SO₄ at the above concentration because it has a desire etch rate for semiconductor material.

Respect to claim 10, the cited prior arts differ from the present invention by the specific ratio of HF:H₂SO₄. However, both Lin and Cripe disclose that the ratio between HF and H₂SO₄ is the result effective variable. The result effective variable is commonly determined by routine experiment. The process of conducting routine experiments so as to produce an expected result is obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art. Hence, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art, at the time of invention, to perform routine experiment to obtain optimal ratio as an expected result.

Conclusion

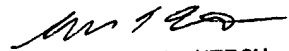
13. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Binh X Tran whose telephone number is (703) 308-1867. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday and every other Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Benjamin L Utech can be reached on (703) 308-3836. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 872-9310 for regular communications and (703) 872-9311 for After Final communications.

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Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0661.

Binh X. Tran
February 7, 2003


BENJAMIN L. UTECH
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 1700